“Say No to Racial, Caste Discrimination”

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República

The New York Times

2025

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“Education has to play a significant role.”

“There should be legal consequences for those people who attack inter-caste couples or engage in untouchability.”

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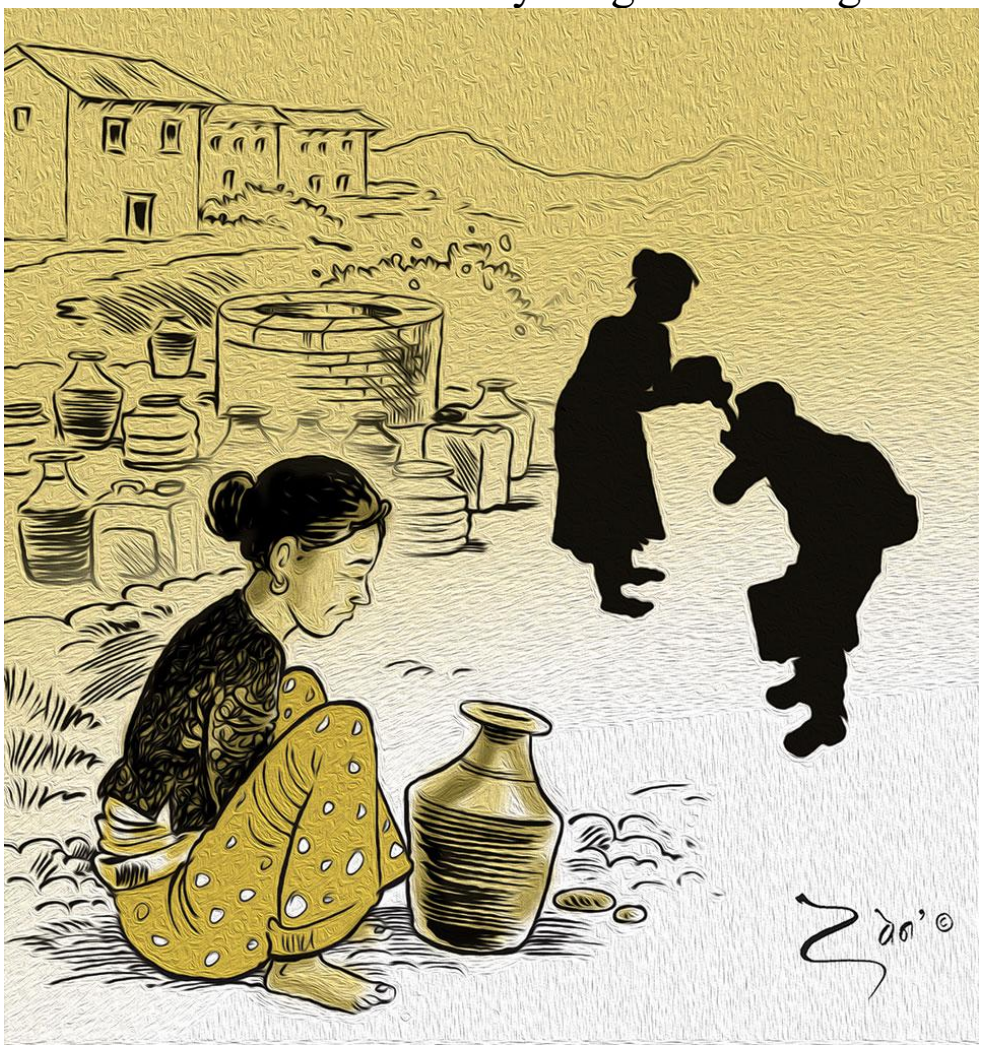
KATHMANDU, March 21, 2025 at 6:00 PM

Editorial

Say No to Racial, Caste Discrimination

Caste discrimination and racism are major problems in Nepal. Despite having legal recourse against race and caste discrimination, lower-caste individuals are discriminated against on a daily basis. In rural Nepal, for example, individuals of what is considered to be "upper castes" will not touch lower-caste individuals and everything that belongs to them.



By Republica

March 21, 2025 at 6:00 PM

Caste discrimination and racism are major problems in Nepal. Despite having legal recourse against race and caste discrimination, lower-caste individuals are discriminated against on a daily basis. In rural Nepal, for example, individuals of what is considered to be "upper castes" will not touch lower-caste individuals and everything that belongs to them. A latest episode in Aurahi of Siraha showed how such discrimination is still pervasive in our society. A group of Yadavs demolished the houses of lower caste-Dom people for organising a religious function. They not only demolished the houses of the Dom people but also scraped the soil where the houses of the lower caste people stood. It seems the upper castes have forgotten that untouchability is illegal, harmful, and wrong in Nepal. People across the world also observe the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and Solidarity Week for People Fighting against Racism and Racial Discrimination annually. Both of them remind us that discrimination is not a matter of choice and is against human rights. This caste system that separates individuals and leads to social and economic inequality still troubles Nepal. People discriminate against and ridicule low-caste people, even brutally beating them for simply desiring to live with dignity.

When persons of different castes marry each other, they invariably become the target of hate and discrimination. Upper caste families oppose such marriages and sometimes result in honor killings and violence and psychological violence. Society even boycotts such couples. Intercaste marriages among lower-caste girls and boys frequently result in violence and a life of fear. It is illegal to discriminate on caste grounds. However, laws cannot change people's inherent attitudes. Caste discrimination is a social, and not a legal, issue. People still follow traditional practices and customs that degrade some citizens. Unless society accepts to change its mentality, discrimination will not stop. However, such injustice is preventable. Education has to play a significant role. Students need to be taught in school that caste should not define a person's value because everyone is born equal. Children need to be taught that discrimination is incorrect and people need to be assessed based on their nature, not caste. Then, the government should strictly enforce laws. There should be legal consequences for those people who attack inter-caste couples or engage in untouchability.

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KATHMANDU, June 3, 2025 at 8:25 PM

POLITICS

Prez calls for standing firm against caste-based discrimination

President Ram Chandra Paudel has urged everyone to stand firmly against caste-based untouchability and discrimination. He stressed this urgent call in his message on the National Day for the Elimination of Caste-Based Discrimination and Untouchability.

By Republica

June 3, 2025 at 8:25 PM

KATHMANDU, June 4: President Ram Chandra Paudel has urged everyone to stand firmly against caste-based untouchability and discrimination. He stressed this urgent call in his message on the National Day for the Elimination of Caste-Based Discrimination and Untouchability.

Wishing happiness, peace, and prosperity to Nepali brothers and sisters at home and abroad, the President declared that caste-based discrimination violates social, moral, and human dignity and amounts to a crime.

He stressed the need to promote social awareness and equality by encouraging mutual harmony, cooperation, and goodwill among all castes and communities. He called on everyone to strengthen national unity through equality and actively oppose caste-based untouchability and discrimination to make the democratic state system effective.

The President urged individuals, families, societies, government bodies at all three levels, political parties, national and international NGOs, civil society, and media professionals to increase their sensitivity and actively fight untouchability and discrimination.

"The Constitution of Nepal embraces the country's multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-religious, multi-cultural, and geographical diversity. It commits to building an equitable society based on proportional inclusion and participation. It protects and promotes unity amid diversity, social and cultural solidarity, tolerance, and goodwill by ending class, caste, regional, linguistic, religious, and gender discrimination as well as all forms of caste-based untouchability to ensure economic equality, prosperity, and social justice," the message reads.

The President expressed confidence that this National Day will inspire relevant agencies to lay a strong foundation to gradually eliminate all forms of discrimination and oppression based on economic, social, political, cultural, and caste grounds.

He highlighted that positive changes in thinking, customs, social norms, and behavior, combined with increased unity, harmony, and goodwill, can reduce caste-based discrimination and untouchability in society. He wished that this National Day inspires everyone to build a cultured, untouchability-free, equitable, and prosperous nation.

The government on 21, 2006 (Jestha 21, 2063 BS) declared it 'Caste-Based Untouchability Free Nation Day.' Since then, the nation observes Jestha 21 annually as the 'National Day for the Elimination of Caste-Based Discrimination and Untouchability.'

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KATHMANDU, June 3, 2025 at 9:25 PM

POLITICS

National Day on Elimination of Caste Discrimination: Speaker's and NA Chair's message

Speaker Devaraj Ghimire has emphasized the need for all citizens, the government, political parties, civil society, journalists, educational institutions, and stakeholders to unite in the campaign against caste discrimination and untouchability by strengthening the spirit of social harmony, equality and coexistence.

By Republica

June 3, 2025 at 9:25 PM

KATHMANDU, June 4: Speaker Devaraj Ghimire has emphasized the need for all citizens, the government, political parties, civil society, journalists, educational institutions, and stakeholders to unite in the campaign against caste discrimination and untouchability by strengthening the spirit of social harmony, equality and coexistence.

On the occasion of the National Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and Untouchability, 2082BS today, he expressed his best wishes, stating that racial discrimination or untouchability is not just a problem of a particular class but a shared challenge for the entire society, nation, and human civilization.

He mentioned that it is necessary today for everyone to raise their voice in favor of equality from their respective places to contribute to building a prosperous nation based on equality.
Similarly, Chairperson of the National Assembly, Narayan Prasad Dahal, expressed that all structures of the state, political leadership, civil society, and the general public must initiate efforts to eliminate the caste discrimination and untouchability practices, which have remained as a social stigma in the history of mankind.

"The numerous historical struggles, people's movements, and social as well as cultural movements undertaken by the Nepali people have led to many legal provisions to abolish racial discrimination and the practice of untouchability, but the traditional mindset, illiteracy, customs, and discrimination in the name of religion have not been completely eradicated from society," he stated.
He wishes that the National Day for the Elimination of Caste Discrimination and Untouchability inspires everyone to build a civilized, advanced, and prosperous nation free from discrimination and untouchability.

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KATHMANDU, June 5, 2025 at 5:30 AM

SOCIETY

Policy exists to eliminate caste discrimination, but commitment falls short

Although there are policy arrangements to end caste-based discrimination and untouchability, stakeholders have pointed out a lack of genuine commitment. Recognizing the contribution of the Dalit community to Nepal's state transformation, the then Interim Parliament declared June 4, 2006 as the 'Day for the Elimination of Caste-Based Discrimination and Untouchability.'

By PABITRA SUNAR

June 5, 2025 at 5:30 AM

KATHMANDU, June 5: Although there are policy arrangements to end caste-based discrimination and untouchability, stakeholders have pointed out a lack of genuine commitment. Recognizing the contribution of the Dalit community to Nepal's state transformation, the then Interim Parliament declared June 4, 2006 as the 'Day for the Elimination of Caste-Based Discrimination and Untouchability.'

Even as this declaration approaches two decades, caste-based discrimination and untouchability have not been eliminated in reality. On the occasion of the National Day for the Elimination of Caste-Based Discrimination and Untouchability, the National Dalit Commission organized a dialogue program on Wednesday. During the dialogue, Dalit expert and writer Sushil BK stated that due to the absence of Dalit-focused policies and programs, the Elimination Day has become a day without meaningful preparation.

"In this period, a new constitution was made, and some Dalit-focused laws were also enacted. But when it comes to implementing the constitution and laws, Dalits have not seen the progress and development they had hoped for," said BK. "Political parties, the judiciary, and even religious communities seem to act in ways that protect discrimination."

He further stated that over 50 Dalits have lost their lives due to caste-based discrimination during this period. "Dalit homes have been bulldozed. This shows a mindset that aims to kill Dalits," he said.

Ekaraj Lakandri, general Secretary of the Dalit NGO Federation (DNF), said that the failure to seriously implement constitutional provisions for Dalit emancipation has led to the lack of expected progress in two decades.

Member of the House of Representatives Parbati Bisunkhe highlighted that despite living in the age of technology, the Dalit community continues to be trapped in archaic systems, which is causing the nation to fall behind.

"At a time when the country should be advancing with technology, it has to struggle against caste-based obstacles," she said. She pointed out that even a decade after the constitution was promulgated by the Constituent Assembly, the expected progress in eliminating caste-based discrimination and untouchability has not been achieved due to a lack of genuine commitment from state authorities.

"Just making policies does not end untouchability. Programs based on these policies have not been implemented properly. Until there is a change in commitment, Nepali society will not move forward smoothly," she said.

Nepali Congress Vice-Chairman Jiwan Pariyar said that although the issue of caste-based untouchability is government-backed, the verdicts have been weak. "It was unfortunate that the Jajarkot incident was ruled as not caused by untouchability," he said. He added that there has been no initiative from government lawyers in such cases.

Attorney General Ramesh Badal noted that there could have been shortcomings on the part of the judge while evaluating evidence in the Jajarkot case. He mentioned that discussions have taken place on this issue and that further study and appeal will follow.

National Assembly Chairperson Narayan Prasad Dahal emphasized that the participation of the Dalit community is essential for stronger laws and policies to eliminate caste-based discrimination.

Devraj Bishwakarma, chairperson of the Dalit Commission, emphasized the need for open discussions to end caste-based discrimination.

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KATHMANDU, June 17, 2025 at 5:41 PM

SOCIETY

Call for G7 to tackle caste-based discrimination as global agenda

In a letter addressed to Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney, who currently holds the G7 presidency, Dr. Drona Rasali—Chair of the Global Conference for a Caste-Free World 2025 and head of Sahayatra—called on G7 leaders to address the global impact of caste-based discrimination, which affects more than 250 million people worldwide. The 130-page memorandum includes historical context, data, and policy recommendations.

By Republica
June 17, 2025 at 5:41 PM

KATHMANDU, June 18: Sahayatra International Alliance for Social Justice, a Canada-registered non-governmental organization, has submitted a formal memorandum to the Group of Seven (G7) nations, urging them to include the elimination of caste- and descent-based discrimination as an official agenda item at the ongoing G7 Summit.

In a letter addressed to Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney, who currently holds the G7 presidency, Dr. Drona Rasali—Chair of the Global Conference for a Caste-Free World 2025 and head of Sahayatra—called on G7 leaders to address the global impact of caste-based discrimination, which affects more than 250 million people worldwide. The 130-page memorandum includes historical context, data, and policy recommendations.

“While caste-based discrimination originated in South Asia, it has spread across continents due to migration and globalization,” said Dr. Rasali. “From Dalits in South Asia and the Roma in Europe to the Burakumin in Japan, numerous communities continue to suffer systemic exclusion, violence, and dehumanization. There can be no sustainable peace without ending such injustice.”

The memorandum was submitted in line with the Toronto Declaration, unanimously adopted at the Global Conference for a Caste-Free World held in Toronto from May 25–27. The declaration calls on global institutions and governments to confront and eradicate caste-based oppression.
It also links the call to one of the three key pillars outlined by Canada’s G7 presidency: “protecting our communities and the world.” The document argues that this goal cannot be met while over 240 million people remain vulnerable due to caste-based discrimination.

“Treating someone as ‘untouchable’ or of ‘lower caste’ based on birth is not only morally indefensible—it violates the core values of democracy, human dignity, and international peace,” said Santosh Bishwakarma, President of Sahayatra.

The memorandum includes a global roadmap for dismantling caste-based systems and urges G7 leaders—representing the world’s most powerful democracies—to take urgent and coordinated action. The 2025 G7 Summit, currently underway in Kananaskis, Alberta, Canada, is being attended by leaders from the United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Japan, Italy, and Canada. Representatives from the European Union, India, and other invited nations are also participating.

This is believed to be the first formal call urging the G7 to confront caste- and descent-based discrimination as a global human rights issue.

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